

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

CABINET

These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Wednesday, 16th January, 2013

Present:

Councillor Paul Crossley	Leader of the Council
Councillor David Dixon	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods
Councillor Simon Allen	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning
Councillor Cherry Beath	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development
Councillor David Bellotti	Cabinet Member for Community Resources
Councillor Dine Romero	Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth
Councillor Roger Symonds	Cabinet Member for Transport

131 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair was taken by Councillor Paul Crossley, Leader of the Council.
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

132 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the evacuation procedure as set out in the Agenda.

133 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

134 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

135 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

136 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

There were 8 questions from the following people: Councillors Colin Barrett (3), Brian Webber, Vic Pritchard, Patrick Anketell-Jones, Anthony Clarke, Tim Warren.

[Copies of the questions and response, including supplementary questions and responses if any, have been placed on the Minute book as Appendix 1 and are available on the Council's website.]

137 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS

Councillor David Martin made a statement and presented a petition [the wording of which *is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 2 and on the Council's website*] relating to AQ78 Combe Down to Claverton Down footpath. The petition, supported by over 160 local residents, asked the Council to create a restricted byway along the path between Combe Down and Claverton Down. The path passes through Rainbow Woods in the south eastern edge of the city. A byway designation would allow a shared cycle/pedestrian use of the path. Cyclists going between these two major residential areas of the city would be able to avoid using the busy main road. It would be of great benefit to students at the University, schoolchildren at Ralph Allen and recreational users and would also mean that the route could be improved and maintained to a better standard than at present.

138 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

On a motion from Councillor Paul Crossley, seconded by Councillor David Dixon, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 5th December 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

139 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET

There were none.

140 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES

There were none.

141 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

142 ODD DOWN PLAYING FIELD DEVELOPMENT

Councillor David Dixon explained that the proposal was to use funding already earmarked under an s.106 agreement but which now needed to be released so that the project to regenerate the Odd Down playing fields could proceed as planned. He explained that there would be a new pavilion, astro pitch, cricket wickets and a number of other improvements. He was delighted to propose the scheme to Cabinet.

Councillor David Bellotti seconded the proposal and reminded Cabinet that the existing facilities at Odd down were very poor, especially the changing rooms which people were reluctant to use. The fields were used by young people as an informal

meeting area, which he felt was to be encouraged. If the fields were renewed, it would be a great success story for the Council.

Councillor Roger Symonds said that he had used the fields for 60 years. The plans would transform the entire facility. He particularly welcomed the plans for an off-road cycle track which, together with a number of other cycling initiatives, would be a great step forward. He emphasised the need to provide facilities for people with disabilities and mentioned some particular initiatives which would encourage disabled people to cycle and skate board.

Councillor Cherry Beath warmly endorsed the proposals. She observed that the nearby Glass House fields were already at full capacity. The proposals would be good for young people and disabled people.

On a motion from Councillor David Dixon, seconded by Councillor David Bellotti, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To APPROVE inclusion of £1,232k in the 2012/13 & 2013/14 Capital Programme, allowing the scheme to proceed as planned; and

(2) To DELEGATE the final agreed project design and deliverables to the Divisional Director Tourism, Leisure and Culture.

143 ANNUAL REVIEW OF FOSTERING, ADOPTIVE AND SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ALLOWANCES

Councillor Dine Romero in moving the proposals said that they were uncontroversial. She explained that the 'level one' fee would not rise, because it was linked to local government pay, but it was felt that the 'level two' fee should nevertheless have a small increase to reflect the special responsibility of looking after children with particularly complex needs. Other allowances would increase by the amount recommended by the Fostering Network.

Councillor Tim Ball seconded the proposal. He explained that he was himself a special guardian but stressed that he did not claim any allowance for this. He would have liked to do more for carers, but agreed that in the circumstances the proposals were the best that could be achieved.

Councillor Roger Symonds observed that some people had faithfully cared for very difficult children for a number of years. He felt that anything that could be done to support them must be done.

On a motion from Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Tim Ball, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

(1) To INCREASE fostering age related allowances and permanence allowances in line with Fostering Network recommendations;

(2) To AGREE that there will be no change in fostering level one fees, family link rates, savings rates for children in care, or supported lodgings;

(3) To AGREE a small increase to level two fees – to reflect drive for in-house placements for teenagers with complex needs; and

(4) To NOTE the current level of care leavers maintenance, which is linked to Job Seekers Allowance.

144 RADSTOCK TO FROME RAILWAY - FEASIBILITY STUDY

Councillor Eleanor Jackson in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website*] said that the Radstock line would only require eight miles of track to be re-engineered and re-laid, and was 14th on the ATOL list of suburban lines which should be re-opened. She said that the estimated cost of £41.3 million would make it much cheaper than any comparable road option, while it would become much easier to ship out goods from the area, reduce congestion and attract tourists. She asked the Cabinet to take the necessary steps to bring back the trains to Radstock.

George Bailey (Radstock Action Group) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes as Appendix 4 and on the Council's website*] said that the feasibility report had been generally negative without looking at opportunities and had ignored several matters. He was pleased to see that officers had recommended the report should be re-worked and gave a number of issues which he felt should be considered more fully in the new report.

The Chair thanked George Bailey and observed that he felt his statement had been the best statement to Cabinet that he had heard.

Councillor Roger Symonds thanked George Bailey and Councillor Eleanor Jackson for their contributions. He felt that the recommendations did reflect the intention to request further work by Halcrow, to address the issues raised by the speakers. He suspected that this would not make very much difference to the outcome as expressed in paragraph 5.8 of the report, which closed the door for the present but not for ever. The long-term aim was to open up Radstock to the whole rail network. He agreed that almost every station had experienced increased usage which was encouraging for the future. He encouraged local people in Radstock to set up an active volunteer group which would prove their commitment to make a future branch line work. He moved proposals which were slightly amended from the officer recommendations, the effect of which would include in the new report the consideration of the possible expansion of the Metro to include Westbury.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposal. He agreed that Halcrow must be told clearly what issues need to be considered in the new report. He was particularly grateful for the ideas from George Bailey and others from Radstock. He felt that there would be good opportunities in the future – if not immediately.

Councillor Simon Allen said that re-opening the line had been a long held ambition and the local community had committed a great deal of work to it. He recognised the need to be realistic about timescales, but said that by protecting the route of the line the Cabinet was ensuring the future possibility of re-opening the line.

Councillor Cherry Beath endorsed what others had said. She referred particularly to the point made by George Bailey about the large contingency and fees built into the costings, which she felt must be reduced to make the project more viable.

Councillor Tim Ball said he also endorsed previous comments. He emphasised that the regeneration of Radstock must be achieved before a branch line could be said to be viable.

Councillor Roger Symonds, in summing up, referred to the comment made by Councillor Simon Allen about the protection of the route. He promised to check this, and if possible to ensure protection. He knew that the majority of the route was in fact protected.

On a motion from Councillor Roger Symonds, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously)

- (1) To NOTE the conclusions of the study as outlined in paragraph 5.11 of the report;
- (2) To NOTE that the majority of the disused railway line remains protected within the Local Plan Policy D9 for 'sustainable transport purposes' which at the moment is represented by a cycle path, NCN 24;
- (3) To ASK Halcrow to review their conclusions in the light of the results of the 2011 Census and the likely growth in housing in the area promoted in the Core Strategy to ascertain if their conclusions remain valid in the light of this more up to date information; and
- (4) To ASK Halcrow to consider the merits of a simple shuttle between Radstock and Westbury to allow access to the wider rail network including intercity services both to London and the South West and the implications of the potential expansion of the Greater Bristol Metro Scheme.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm

Chair _____

Date Confirmed and Signed _____

Prepared by Democratic Services